

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNITION OF CORPORAL  
ROBERT H. MEIER

**HON. DAVE BRAT**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 8, 2018*

Mr. BRAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Corporal Robert H. Meier. Corporal Meier served in the 88th Division which served in continuous combat operations for 14 months. Corporal Meier would eventually make the ultimate sacrifice as a soldier in Castleforte, Italy in 1944 where he was killed in action. Corporal Meier's nephew, Bob Meier, recognized that his uncle should have, in addition to receiving the Purple Heart, received Combat Infantryman's Badge and Bronze Star.

Because of Bob Meier's effort, and the work of my staff and the U.S. Army we were able to ensure that Corporal Meier received his medals posthumously and that his legacy will be passed along to future generations.

CHINA IN AFRICA: THE NEW  
COLONIALISM?

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 8, 2018*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we held a hearing on China in Africa. The hearing analyzed China's activity and engagement in sub-Saharan Africa. In particular, we looked into what motivates China and how Chinese involvement has affected African countries.

While a number of African nations have welcomed Chinese engagement and investment, it often comes at a cost: a focus on extractive industries, entanglement with a neo-mercantilist trade policy and a tendency to adopt "worst practices" that prop up kleptocrats and autocrats—such as the DR Congo's Joseph Kabila—while fueling corruption in an effort to win contracts.

China's engagement in Africa once was driven by revolutionary ideology, motivated by competition with the Soviet Union as much as it was directed at "capitalist roaders" aligned with the United States. In Angola, for example, in 1975, Soviet-backed Communists bested Chinese-backed revolutionary rivals, including Jonas Savimbi, who was a Maoist before he was reborn in the 1980s as an anti-Communist freedom fighter.

Today, China's one-time Marxist-Leninist-Maoist impulse has been softened to the point of almost—but not quite—disappearing, with revolution replaced by infrastructure projects, trade missions, soft loans and scholarships for promising African students.

While on the one hand Africa needs investment and it needs infrastructure, we see a worrisome trend of African countries sliding into indebtedness to China, accumulating bur-

dens that may be beyond their capacity to meet.

All too often, the roads China builds are meant to allow it access to mineral resources that it can extract and ship to China, or are part of its "One-Belt, One-Road" initiative which is designed to benefit China, ultimately, and help it project power. Further, as anyone who has been to Africa has observed, these grand construction projects often utilize Chinese engineers and workers, not Africans.

As we heard yesterday from the witnesses, nowhere in Africa is the problem of indebtedness more pronounced than in Djibouti—a strategically important country in the Horn of Africa which sits astride the Mandeb Strait, and one of only five African countries which Secretary of State Tillerson is visiting on his trip to Africa this week.

A former French colony, Djibouti hosts a French military base, and an American one at Camp Lemonnier. And, since last summer, Djibouti also hosts China's only permanent military base outside of China. Query whether that concession, fraught with geopolitical implications, is linked to leverage China is able to exert due to Djibouti's vulnerability on indebtedness.

China's overall foreign aid and financial leverage on the continent has been difficult to quantify, as has demonstrating how that translates into influence. Yeoman work in this regard has been done by AidData at the College of William & Mary which, in written testimony that was submitted as part of the record today, demonstrates a correlation with how an African country votes at the United Nations General Assembly with how much aid it receives from China.

Another strategically important country with high indebtedness to China that the Secretary will visit is Ethiopia. It is also a country where China has most clearly aligned itself with repressive forces. In addition to assisting the government in controlling information flows, such as via signal jamming of Voice of American and BBC broadcasts, the Chinese Communist Party has engaged with Ethiopia's ruling party on "training and exchanges."

As the Brookings Institution has documented, cadres from the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front "were taught comprehensively how to manage their own organizational structure, ideological work, propaganda system, [and] cadre education."

Thus, it seems ideology still matters with regard to how China engages Africa. It is no coincidence that Ethiopia has become one of the most repressive regimes on the continent, and the subject of a House resolution focused on Ethiopia's abusive practices that Ms. BASS and I have sponsored, H. Res. 128. Whereas the U.S. emphasizes good governance, it suits China's interest to train its partners in old-style Leninism.

We also heard from one of our witnesses on how China projects power in the form of Confucius Institutes located in close to forty African nations. This subcommittee has held hearings on how China in our own country

and elsewhere uses these Institutes to push a Sinocentric narrative which aligns with Communist Party propaganda and curtails academic freedom.

In addition to utilizing Confucius Institutes to train Mandarin speakers and indoctrinate students with a pro-China world view, China is expanding its media presence in Africa. Kenya is the country with the largest penetration of Chinese media and the highest level of brand recognition, according to our Broadcasting Board of Governors, which oversees the Voice of America and which recently conducted a survey of China's media presence in Africa. It should be noted that of five major international networks in Kenya, China's news broadcasts were the least trusted.

Here also is a thought for Voice of America and the Broadcasting Board of Governors to consider—add Mandarin programming to the repertoire of languages in which you broadcast in Africa. By broadcasting objective news stories in Mandarin, you will expose not only African students learning Mandarin to more truthful media, but you will be able to reach the estimated million or so Chinese living or working in Africa with news that they are otherwise unable to access.

China is also Kenya's largest bilateral lender, and one of the three highest debtor nations to China in Africa, along with Djibouti and Ethiopia. It is also a country where Secretary Tillerson will be visiting. On his trip, he may want to highlight the following anecdote, which I believe aptly contrasts China's Africa engagement with that of the United States.

Health commodities supplied by USAID, including life-saving anti-retrovirals distributed as part of our PEPFAR program and anti-malarial commodities, used to be shipped to and stored in a warehouse near Nairobi for distribution not only throughout Kenya, but also in neighboring East African countries as well.

Then in July 2013, Kenya's parliament imposed a 1.5 per cent levy on all imports to Kenya to help pay for a nearly \$4 billion railroad from the port of Mombasa to Nairobi built by the state-owned China Road and Bridge Corporation. Donated goods—including anti-retrovirals for Kenyans living with HIV/AIDS—were subject to this levy to help pay Kenya's debt to China.

As a result of this, the flow of life-saving commodities into Kenya and neighboring countries was burdened and slowed. Kenya's Ministry of Health offered to step in and pay the levy, but their payments were often delayed by some two months. Meanwhile, demurrage charges attributable to clearance delays continued to accrue, and had to be paid by the U.S. taxpayer.

Ultimately, over a year later, Kenya's parliament amended the legislation to exclude donated goods from the Chinese railway-payment levy, but the damage had been done. Today, due to this experience and other factors related to logistics and a new USAID implementing partner, USAID no longer uses a warehouse in Kenya. Storage and distribution has been moved offshore, to a location less-

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